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CIA ACTIVITIES AND THE WARREN COMMISSION INVESTIGATION

SUMMARY

There is a need to investigate the role of the CIA and the FBI in the investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy, and their relationships with Lee Harvey Oswald. Since several agencies had files on Oswald which can be checked against each other, a useful case study of CIA practices is possible. These records should shed light on the interception of mail to Russia, CIA concern about (and file-keeping on) domestic political activities, and other questionable activities.

Unresolved questions about the CIA and the assassination include CIA coverage of Oswald and maybe an impostor in Mexico City, reports that he was an informant, and a contact with a U.S. intelligence operative in Moscow. This memo summarizes the available record and suggests specific inquiries.

The CIA misled the FBI about the CIA file on Oswald, and may not have cooperated fully with the Warren Commission (as the FBI and the Defense Department did not). For example, the CIA may not have told the Commission about all their records on Oswald's wife or his activities in Mexico. This memo specifies documents and people who could clarify the Warren Commission's work with the CIA and their investigation of these matters.

The CIA may have investigated the assassination more thoroughly and longer than the Commission. The results of the CIA investigation, and possible actions against Warren Report critics, should be clarified for the public.

Previously unreported evidence presented here is relevant to the reports that a CIA attempt to kill Fidel Castro may have backfired against Kennedy. Oswald or an impersonator, in the company of anti-Castro Cubans, visited Cuban emigree Sylvia Odio in Dallas and was said to feel that Kennedy should have been shot. These men were apparently friends of Odio's father, who was imprisoned in Cuba because of his role in an assassination attempt against Castro. Even without knowledge of this fact, the Warren Commission staff considered the Odio incident very important and speculated that it might have reflected a conspiracy. The Commission's investigation was quite inadequate - for example, in not checking out reports of an Oswald look-alike in Dallas who was affiliated with the same anti-Castro group as Odio's father's co-conspirators against Castro. The CIA's role in this particular attempt against Castro, and in the dissemination of apparently false stories that Robert Kennedy feared that an attempt against Castro which he had authorized had backfired, must be examined fully.

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March 24, 1975

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March 24, 1975

CIA ACTIVITIES AND THE WARREN COMMISSION INVESTIGATION

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March 24, 1

I. INTRODUCTION

A. FEDERAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES AND THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

Even before the disclosures of the last three months, there were ample reasons for an investigation of improper activities by the CIA and the FBI in the case of Lee Harvey Oswald, and of the extent of the cooperation between these agencies and the Warren Commission.

After the assassination, allegations were promptly made that Oswald had been an informant or employee of some intelligence agency (and that therefore the Secret Service had not been warned about him). Even though the Warren Commission took these reports very seriously, it failed to properly investigate either this specific charge or the exact nature of the relationships between Oswald and the CIA, the FBI, and military intelligence.

The bulk of the Commission's investigation was done through various federal agencies, notably the FBI. Thus these agencies were in large part responsible for the coverup of much of what the Commission was supposed to be reporting for the American people. It is clear, for example, that the FBI misled the Warren Commission about the extent of its files on Oswald, and also in other ways discouraged the Commission from examining the implications of some of the Bureau's intelligence-gathering methods - e.g., the interception of several of Oswald's letters to left-wing political groups. Hoover sidetracked the Commission's investigation of the allegation that Oswald had been an FBI informant, and went through semantic contortions to deny the fact that Jack Ruby had apparently been a Potential Criminal Informant for the FBI.

B. THE UTILITY OF A STUDY OF THE RECORDS

The Oswald case provides an unusual opportunity to check the practices and records of one intelligence agency against the files kept by other agencies. A great deal of information has been published by the Warren Commission, made available in the National Archives, or preserved there but not released. This includes the purportedly complete files on Oswald of the CIA, the State Department, and the Defense Department (including the Office of Naval Intelligence), as well as a list of the FBI Headquarters file. There is, however, evidence that those files are not complete, and suggestions that sensitive or improper activities, domestic and foreign, were not fully recorded in the appropriate files. An analysis of the flow of records in this case could provide a "control" study useful in other cases. This would be particularly helpful if credible allegations of improper CIA activities are not supported by the records made available to the investigating committees.

The available evidence on the FBI's relationship with, and files on, Oswald will be analyzed in a book I am writing. This memo concentrates on the CIA, with emphasis on specific questions relevant to domestic CIA activities, possible CIA nondisclosure to the Warren Commission, and possible links between the assassination and CIA attempts to kill Fidel Castro.

Copies of available documents which are cited can be obtained from me. Where possible, I have specified known but unavailable records which might be relevant.

I have deliberately excluded certain extremely implausible allegations for which the purported evidence is weak. Charges have even been made that the CIA or the FBI was responsible for the assassination. Despite the lack of evidence or logical support for many of these allegations, they are, I think, a matter of substantial public concern. A serious attempt to answer specific questions which have been raised seems appropriate. I am concerned that bad evidence tends to drive out good evidence; the necessary rebuttal of some of the wilder allegations must not become an excuse for avoiding more complicated, but more plausible, charges.

Consideration should be given to the possibility of disinformation being used by some intelligence agency to focus attention away from less sensational but more serious charges. Within the past year someone has gone to the trouble of putting together and making available to some Warren Report critics a false FBI document relating to purported connections between Jack Ruby and the federal government.[1] Also, statements have been made about a purported anti-Kennedy National Security Council memo which (if it exists at all) may well be the result of a disinformation effort.[2]

II. THE CIA AND LEE HARVEY OSWALD

A. QUESTIONS ABOUT DOMESTIC CIA INTELLIGENCE GATHERING

The first three of these questions may not be very significant in the assassination investigation, but they might lead to new information about the extent of certain questionable CIA activities.

1. GOVERNMENT KNOWLEDGE OF LETTER SENT TO OSWALD IN RUSSIA

Did the CIA intercept a letter and money order which Oswald's mother sent to him shortly after he defected to Russia? If, as the record suggests, this did happen, why do the FBI and CIA files given to the Commission not fully reflect this?

The first known FBI report relating to Oswald starts with the statement that Mrs. Marguerite Oswald "is reported to have purchased 'foreign money transfer No. 142,688' at the First National Bank of Fort Worth, Texas, on 1/22/60 by means of which she sent the sum of $25 to her son, Lee Harvey Oswald, in care of

Hotel Metropole, Moscow, Russia.[3]" The FBI told the Warren Commission that "we determined on January 25, 1960, that Mrs. Marguerite C. Oswald had transmitted the sum of $25" to Oswald at the Metropole Hotel;[4] this prompted interviews of Mrs. Oswald and her other son.

It seems atypical that the contemporary FBI report gives no indication of the origin of that information; that omission may indicate a particularly sensitive source. The recently disclosed CIA project of "selective" interception of mail from the U.S. to Russia and China may have been involved. The CIA has claimed that this program was in operation in 1960 in only one city.[5]

It is also quite possible that the FBI got its information about this private transaction from the bank. The money order was purchased on a Friday, and the FBI learned of it on Monday - which seems a bit fast for a mail interception.

The CIA file on Oswald given to the Commission contains no information on this other than the FBI report.[6] The relevant FBI file was not given to or listed for the Commission.[7] The FBI should be asked specifically about their source for this report.

2. CIA ATTENTION TO OSWALD'S POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

In the summer of 1963, Oswald engaged in various legal political activities in New Orleans on behalf of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. He distributed literature on the street several times, once being arrested after getting into a scuffle, and participated in a radio debate.

The FBI sent the CIA copies of six reports entitled "Lee Harvey Oswald" or "Funds Transmitted to Residents of Russia," including four after his return to the U.S. in 1962. This seems proper, since as a former resident of Russia he was of interest to the CIA. It may be more significant, in terms of the extent of CIA attention to domestic dissent, that the FBI also sent the CIA a report entitled "Fair Play for Cuba Committee - New Orleans Division." In fact, this report dealt only with Oswald and "A. J. Hidell," later determined to be his alias.[8]

An attempt should be made to understand the dissemination of that report inside the Agency - that is, to see whether it was processed not only as a report on Oswald but as a report on a politically active group. That might lead to a better understanding of the CIA's handling of such information on other groups.

It should be determined if any CIA personnel (employees or informants) were aware of Oswald's activities in New Orleans. The Warren Report says that the CIA "took note of his Fair Play for Cuba Committee activities in New Orleans."[9] There is no footnote for that statement; it may refer only to the presence of the FBI report on the FPCC in Oswald's CIA file, but that should be checked.

3. COMPUTERIZED FILE ENTRIES FOR OSWALD AND OTHERS

In the CIA file, the "CS copy" of the FBI report on the New Orleans FPCC is stamped "Index," and handwritten notations indicate that two of the names mentioned were indexed in a standardized (presumably computerized) form. One was Oswald; the other was Carlos Bringuier, an anti-Castro Cuban citizen living in New Orleans.[10]

Apparently these men were indexed to record their connections with the FPCC and the DRE (Revolutionary Student Directorate, possibly a CIA-supported group) respectively. This is in itself of no particular significance in connection with the assassination, but an explanation may shed some light on the CIA's file-building procedures.

4. THE 544 CAMP STREET CONNECTION

The most provocative link between Oswald's activities in New Orleans and the CIA is his use of the address 544 Camp Street on some of his pro-Castro literature. One office in that building had previously been occupied by one of the two principal offices of the Cuban Revolutionary Council, a front organization established by the CIA (reportedly through E. Howard Hunt) in connection with the Bay of Pigs invasion. It is apparently true, as the Warren Report noted,[11] that the CRC had left 544 Camp Street some time earlier, and that Oswald himself never actually rented an office there. However, at the time of the assassination, another office at 544 Camp was occupied by Guy Banister, a former FBI agent who was still active in intelligence work, especially Cuban activities. The Banister connection was never pursued by the Warren Commission.

The 544 Camp connection was extensively publicized at the time of Jim Garrison's "investigation." Numerous reports surfaced of witnesses who could link Oswald with David Ferrie and others who hung around Banister's office. Unfortunately many of these reports come from sources who must be considered unreliable, and who might have had reasons of their own for exaggerating this link. The most promising source of hard evidence on this matter would be a close study of the pre-assassination FBI and CIA records.

From a document not given to the Warren Commission but released to me under the Freedom of Information Act, it can be firmly established that the FBI knew before the assassination about Oswald's use of 544 Camp Street as an address for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. This fact was not mentioned in the appropriate contemporaneous reports, and was apparently not checked out at the time, even though FBI field offices had been specifically asked to be on the alert for FPCC activities, and the FBI did check out other similar leads (such as the Post Office Box on some of Oswald's literature, and the alias A. J. Hidell).

After the assassination, the FBI hid from the Commission the fact that it had known about Oswald's use of 544 Camp Street earlier, and suppressed the link to Banister by giving his address (531 Lafayette Street) without indicating that it was the same corner building as 544 Camp Street. Even the limited amount of documentary evidence which has not been kept from the Warren Commission and the public strongly suggests that the FBI was keeping hands off Oswald's activities, quite plausibly because the Bureau believed that he was not in fact a pro-Castro activist but was working for Banister or for some official intelligence agency.

5. ALLEGATIONS THAT OSWALD WAS A CIA INFORMANT

The Commission heard, and was concerned about, allegations that Oswald had been a CIA or FBI informant.[12] The Commission's rebuttal rested largely on affidavits provided by CIA Director John McCone and J. Edgar Hoover.[13] However, the members of the Commission had been told in secret session by Allen Dulles that the CIA would generally not admit someone had been an informant or agent, even under oath, except at the specific direction of the President.[14] This fact, which was apparently not passed on to the Commission's working staff, makes the CIA's pro forma denial totally worthless.

An attempt to resolve this matter now should include interrogation of the appropriate lower-level CIA personnel. One should also try to specify and evaluate the specific situations in which Oswald might have been approached by the CIA. One obvious possibility was on his return from Russia. From the existing record, he was not debriefed by the CIA, which in itself seems odd.[15] Unlike another defector who returned at about the same time, Oswald was not questioned by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.[16] (Oswald was met on his return by a case worker for the Travelers Aid Society, who was also an official of an 'anti-Bolshevik' organization with strong intelligence connections.[17]) The extent of the CIA's routine coverage of people returning from Russia is not known, but it was extensive enough to net a photograph taken by a tourist in Minsk which (after the assassination) was found to show Oswald. The question is, therefore, not just whether the CIA ever contacted Oswald, but if not why not.

In 1962, Oswald prepared (and had typed) a manuscript about his life in Russia which was full of the kind of details which might logically be of interest to the CIA. The Warren Report's brief account avoids the evidence that Oswald did not keep all of the material which was typed for him.[18] Inquiries should be made to see if the CIA got any of it, perhaps under circumstances which would not have led to it being filed under his name.

Considerable publicity has been given to allegations that Oswald was a CIA informant for which there is no substantial direct evidence. It should be noted that it is considerably more likely that he had an informant relationship

with someone else, notably the FBI, but also perhaps military intelligence or some non-official intelligence organization. I have studied in detail how the FBI failed to adequately rebut the claim that Oswald was an informant, and how the Warren Commission responded to Hoover's obvious displeasure at being investigated by failing to press for satisfactory explanations.

For example, the FBI omitted from their original listing of Oswald's address book the name of one of the Bureau's Special Agents; the record strongly suggests that the FBI lied to conceal the fact that the relevant page of that listing was retyped. Also, the FBI submitted affidavits denying that Oswald was an informant from several agents, supposedly all of those who were in a position to recruit him or know of his service. Some of the affidavits were revised before being given to the Commission, allegedly with no material alteration of the substance, but the originals are withheld. Also, no affidavits were provided from the two New Orleans agents who had the most contact with the Oswald case.[19] An examination of the circumstances under which these affidavits were prepared might be productive. Another peculiar FBI explanation which the Commission never challenged was Hoover's statement that the FBI interview of Oswald when he was in custody after the assassination was not only to gather facts or admissions about the shooting, but was also aimed at obtaining "any information he might have been able to furnish of a security nature."[20] This cryptic language suggests that Oswald had been considered a potential source of internal security information. These examples are by no means the only or even the strongest indications that the FBI had something in their relationship with Oswald which they thought necessary to hide from the Warren Commission.

B. UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CIA AND THE ASSASSINATION

This section covers a number of questions about the intelligence agencies (primarily the CIA) and the assassination which were not satisfactorily resolved by the Warren Commission. (They are presented here in summary form. Further details and the available documentation, which comes largely from the Commission's records, can be provided by the author.) Whether or not these questions fall within the mandate of the Rockefeller and Church investigations, they do need to be answered. There is no doubt that a new investigation of the Kennedy assassination should explore these issues, among others. The focus here is on problems where a study of the documentary record is likely to be productive, so this memo goes into only a small fraction of the defects in the Commission's case against Lee Harvey Oswald.

1. PHOTOGRAPHS OF POSSIBLE OSWALD IMPOSTOR IN MEXICO CITY

In October 1963 the CIA learned of Oswald's visit to the Russian Embassy in Mexico City. Several photographs were obtained, presumably from a Mexican police surveillance camera at the Embassy, of a still-unidentified Embassy visitor who does not physically resemble Oswald. This man was identified as Oswald in a CIA telegram to the FBI before the assassination. The explanation of the mixup in identification, if that is what it was, was not released by the Warren Commission. Some CIA explanation, true or not, is presumably in the withheld documents at the Archives. It may also be that the unidentified man was an associate of Oswald, or an impostor.[21]

2. INTERCEPTED CONVERSATIONS BY OR ABOUT OSWALD IN MEXICO

An FBI report on Oswald in Mexico strongly suggests that the CIA intercepted at least two phone calls between the Cuban and Russian Embassies in which Oswald was discussed. During one phone call Oswald was apparently on the phone himself.[22] The CIA also had detailed knowledge of Oswald's conversation with a guard at the Soviet Embassy, including the fact that he spoke broken Russian; this conversation may also have been bugged.[23] A recording of these calls would be important evidence as to whether an impostor was making some of these contacts on Oswald's behalf. The CIA has declined to tell me whether any such recorded conversations now exist, or to release any relevant records to me.

3. DID E. HOWARD HUNT KNOW OF OSWALD'S ACTIVITIES BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION?

It has been reported that E. Howard Hunt was the CIA's acting station chief in Mexico City during August and September 1963, which might overlap with Oswald's visit starting in late September.[24] Hunt has reportedly denied to the Rockefeller Commission that he met Oswald at that time.[25] It should be determined if Hunt had any knowledge of Oswald's activities, whether or not he met him. This requires an examination of contemporaneous CIA records relating to Oswald, and an understanding of the flow of communications within the CIA station. A number of the internal CIA communications were turned over to the Warren Commission (and are still withheld)[26]; however, they may not include all the information needed to determine who in the CIA station had substantial contact with the Oswald case.

4. THE HANDLING OF THE STORY OF "D"

An attempt should be made to understand what role CIA personnel might have played in building up, disseminating, and then denigrating a report that Oswald had received money to kill Kennedy from someone at the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City.[27] The circumstances suggest that someone with intelligence connections was eager to push the idea that the Cuban government was behind the Kennedy assassination.

The immediate source of the story was Gilberto Alvarado Ugarte, a Nicaraguan who said he was trying to get to Cuba on a penetration mission for the Nicaraguan Secret Service. After a few days he reportedly retracted his story, saying that he had made it up to get the U.S. to take action against Castro; then he withdrew this retraction. He ultimately took a lie detector test which showed he was lying; he then said that the lie detector must be correct. This kind of retraction suggests that Alvarado had told the story as an agent who later did not know whose orders to follow.

At first this story was treated with considerable respect. The CIA communications (which went to the White House as well as the FBI, the State Department, and the Secret Service) show that the agency was taking the allegation quite seriously. Alvarado was said to be of questionable reliability but not wholly discredited; the CIA described him as a "very serious person who speaks with conviction."[28]

It is known that President Johnson was concerned about a Castro plot when he set up the Warren Commission, and that he did not accept all the conclusions of the Warren Report; it has been reported that he specifically believed that the assassination was a retaliatory act by the Cuban Communists.[29] That is, the apparent effect of the story of "D" - which may have been intended - was to impress upon President Johnson (and thus ultimately on the Warren Commission) the potential threat of an international incident posed by the reports that Castro was behind the assassination, and (by extension) by any alternative to the lone-assassin hypothesis.

The Warren Report concluded that Alvarado was lying about having seen Oswald, but did not explore the possible implications of a planted false story. It is plausible that a major conscious or subconscious motivation for a coverup was a desire to avoid allegations of conspiracy such as this one which were thought to be untrue but which might lead to very serious problems. Some observers have recognized a pattern of anti-Castro allegations arising from intelligence-related sources, including Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis.[30]

5. CORRELATION OF VARIOUS AGENCY FILES AND ACTIONS CONCERNING OSWALD

The files of the FBI, State, and Marines on Oswald before the assassination reflect various peculiar actions which might be explained not only by Oswald being an agent of the agency which was acting oddly, but by a belief that he was working for someone else. Such an evaluation, of course, would probably never be written down; it would be detectable only through resulting agency actions or omissions.

As far as I know, the Warren Commission never did the required kind of

detailed comparative study of the intelligence agency files. Considerable attention was given to the most striking anomalies in the State Department file, notably the Department's efforts to facilitate Oswald's return from Russia, and the ease with which he got a new passport in late 1963. Even in the case of the State Department, however, the Commission did not get into all the major questions about the evaluation of Oswald. For example, the Commission examined the reasons why the Passport Office did not react to the CIA telegram about Oswald's visit to the Russian Embassy, but failed to explore the reaction of others, primarily the Office of Security, for whom the telegram was more relevant.

The relatively sparse CIA file does not reflect any such strikingly peculiar actions. However, close study of the CIA file by an expert might reveal if they did anything odd in the Oswald case. It is quite possible, for example, that someone in the CIA recognized that his defection and return might have been a mission for (e.g.) military intelligence, and that the Agency therefore kept away from his case, making no attempt to question him about his stay in Russia.

6. POSSIBLE UNUSUAL CIA INTEREST IN DEFECTORS

In 1960, the year after Oswald's move to Russia, the CIA and the State Department exchanged some correspondence relating to defectors in general. The purpose of this study, which included compiling statistics and making lists of Americans who had defected, is not clear. Although this material was given to the Warren Commission, apparently no explanation was asked for or provided.

There have been rumors that Otto Otepka, who worked on this project and with Oswald's file while he was head of the State Department's Office of Security, was suspicious of the way the Oswald case was handled. He should be given the opportunity to present any relevant information he might have.

7. POSSIBLE CIA CONTACT WITH OSWALD THROUGH ALEXIS DAVISON

Oswald's notebook contained the name and address of a Russian living in Atlanta who was identified as the mother of the U.S. Embassy Doctor, Alexis Davison. Davison had routinely examined Oswald's wife when the couple was preparing to return to the U.S. in 1962. Davison gave no persuasive explanation of why he gave his mother's address to the Oswalds, suggesting only an understanding that they could look her up if they happened to be in Atlanta. Davison told the Secret Service he did not remember the Oswalds, but later recalled the contact quite clearly for the FBI and said he did not recall giving his mother's address to any other people who were going back to the U.S.[31]

In December 1962, Davison was charged by the USSR with receiving information from the American spy Oleg Penkovsky. Evidently, in addition to his

official duties as a medical doctor and an Assistant Air Attaché, Davison was engaged in very sensitive intelligence work. It should be determined if he had any contact with Oswald in that capacity, or reported to any intelligence agency about him.

8. REPORT OF DALLAS CIA AGENT FAMILIAR WITH OSWALD

George DeMohrenschildt, a man with many hints of intelligence connections in his own background who helped the Oswald family in Dallas, testified that before doing so he asked one or more of his friends if that would be okay. One person whom he said he may have asked about Oswald was J. Walton Moore, who he thought was an FBI agent.[32] Moore was probably in fact with the CIA: he interviewed DeMohrenschildt at length in 1957 after his trip to Yugoslavia. He did have an office in a government building and was listed as an "employee, U.S. government;" the FBI told DeMohrenschildt that Moore was not with the FBI.[33]

The Warren Commission seems not to have been interested in this or other reports that the government had indicated that Oswald was not someone who had to be avoided.[34] An attempt should be made to identify Moore's employer, determine what he knew about Oswald, and what he may have told DeMohrenschildt or anyone else.

9. ALLEGED PRESENCE OF CIA AGENT AT PARKLAND HOSPITAL

Within an hour of the assassination, a CIA agent presented his credentials to a Secret Service agent at Parkland Hospital and said that he would be "available." It is not clear what he might have been expected to do. A short time later an unknown FBI agent had to be forcibly restrained from entering the emergency room.[35] Apparently the Commission did not investigate either of these occurrences. As far as I know the CIA was not asked what action they may have taken in Dallas or in Washington after Kennedy was shot or after Oswald was arrested.

10. QUESTIONABLE RECORDS OF OSWALD'S SECURITY CLEARANCE

One of the peculiarities in Oswald's military records which is suggestive of an intelligence connection has to do with his security clearance. The personnel file which was given to the Commission by the Marine Corps reflected only that Oswald had been given a Confidential clearance. However, persuasive testimony indicated that Oswald (like the other men in his unit) must have been cleared at least for Secret information. When the Commission staff asked about this discrepancy, the Marine Corps said, in effect, that if Oswald was doing Secret work then he must have had Secret clearance.[36] The Commission apparently did not press for a proper answer or otherwise resolve this problem.

Irregularities of this kind at least raise the possibility that Oswald had been "sheep dipped" - that is, that he was formally discharged from the Marines while actually continuing government employment for some sort of intelligence work. There is firm evidence that the Department of Defense was not telling the truth when it claimed that it had given the Warren Commission all of its records on Oswald. His pay records, for example, were submitted months after that claim. There is solid documentary evidence of other omissions. There are also hints of further missing records: the FBI was told soon after the assassination that the CIC and CID files at the California base where Oswald had served in 1959 had nothing on Oswald; some of the California Marine Corps files had been forwarded to Washington.[37] These files might be expected to contain the records of any investigation for a high-level clearance.

II. ALLEGED PHOTO OF HUNT AND STURGIS IN DALLAS

The Rockefeller Commission is reportedly checking out and rebutting the allegation that E. Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis (also known as Fiorini) appear in the photographs of several men apparently picked up by the Dallas police immediately after the assassination. These photographs represent an authentic unresolved mystery, it is true; however, the men pictured have been "positively identified" on previous occasions, as other "suspects" in the assassination.

Aside from the absence of any striking similarity in appearance, it is inherently most unlikely that a professional intelligence operative like Hunt (who got a wig just to interview Dita Beard) would get himself photographed without a disguise at the scene of an assassination if he had anything to do with it.

While such allegations should be seriously checked out, they should not be allowed to distract attention from more plausible but less spectacular evidence of improper CIA activities in connection with Oswald or the assassination investigation. To allow that to happen would be to invite disinformation efforts by the Agency and its friends.

C. STATEMENT BY JAMES ANGLETON

It is quite possible that a CIA investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy was among the domestic activities which recently caused concern within the Agency. At the time of his resignation as head of the CIA's Counter-intelligence Division, James Angleton was quoted as making the following remarks when Seymour Hersh asked about alleged CIA wrongdoing and his domestic activities: "A mansion has many rooms and there were many things going on during the period of the [anti-war (NYT addition)] bombings. I'm not privy to who struck John."[33]

From the context of Angleton's statement, it is impossible to decide what he may have been referring to. "Who struck John" may be a literary reference or cliche which is not familiar to me. It may have been a reference to some other John - e.g., Mitchell. Also, it is conceivable that "Who Struck John" was some sort of code name for a CIA study of the Kennedy assassination.

Angleton should be asked to explain that statement, and whether he is aware of any CIA investigations of Oswald or the assassination, particularly any which may have reached conclusions different from the Warren Commission's. Regardless of what Angleton now says he meant by his comment, an intended reference to John Kennedy seems as likely as any other explanation.

D. AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL

Warren Commission Document [CD] 692 purports to be an exact copy of the CIA's pre-assassination dossier on Oswald. Of the material predating Oswald's October 1963 trip to Mexico, almost all has been released; most is information from other agencies. A good part of the Mexico material is still withheld.[39]

A number of other Commission Documents and internal memoranda deal with the CIA's pre- and post-assassination investigations. Some of the withheld CD's would be very interesting: e.g., CD 935, a Top Secret CIA memo dealing in part with the reaction of the Cuban Intelligence Service to the assassination.[40] Enough of the CIA material submitted to the Commission has been released to provide a basis for the formulation of appropriately specific questions.

Certainly most of the still withheld material should be released at this time. However, overemphasis on the material at the Archives should be avoided. Erroneous claims are frequently made that many of the Warren Commission files have been locked up for 75 years from the date of the assassination. In fact, there is no such fixed-term withholding. All of the withheld material is reviewed every five years, and in addition is subject to agency and judicial review under the Freedom of Information Act when a request is made by any citizen. Some of the withheld material might even remain withheld for more than 75 years. In fact, an extraordinary amount of investigative material (largely raw data in FBI reports) has been released or published. This was done to some degree over the objection of the FBI.

It is probable that the most sensitive material in government files on Oswald never reached the Warren Commission. I am sure that was the case with the FBI files, only a small fraction of which were given to the Commission.

In response to my Freedom of Information Act requests, the CIA has told me that they "are highly in favor of declassifying everything possible in connection with the records of the Warren Commission. The most convincing motive for us to

do this is our firm belief that all the information so declassified would merely go to support the conclusions of the Warren Commission and dispel any possible confusion or suspicion that the continued classification may have raised."[41] (This motive has been balanced against the protection of classified information and intelligence sources and methods.) I expect that this is a sincere opinion, at least as it applies to the CIA material in the Archives. (The following section examines the indications that the CIA did not make a full disclosure to the Commission.) Of course, even the currently available material invalidates many of the Commission's conclusions.

Because of these facts, the demand for release of the Warren Commission's records should be only a part of the demand for full disclosure. At the very least, the CIA should be asked about files other than CD 692 in which there is any reference to Lee Harvey Oswald or to members of his family.

III. THE CIA AND THE INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION

A. POSSIBILITY THAT INFORMATION WAS WITHHELD FROM THE COMMISSION

1. FALSE CIA STATEMENT TO THE FBI ON NOVEMBER 22, 1963

On the day of the assassination, an FBI agent from the Washington field office interviewed Birch D. O'Neal of the CIA for the purpose of obtaining "any information" in the CIA files on Oswald. According to the FBI's report, he "learned there is nothing in CIA file [sic] regarding Oswald other than material furnished to CIA by the FBI and the Department of State."[42] That was certainly untrue, most conspicuously with regard to the important CIA-originated material about Oswald's trip to Mexico.[43]

The possibility that the FBI misrecorded the CIA statement must be acknowledged. The Bureau's headquarters file included some CIA-created records, so the Bureau should have known that the CIA claim was wrong when they reported it to the Warren Commission. Whatever O'Neal's exact statement about the CIA file was, it seems clear that the CIA did not want to immediately reveal to the FBI the full extent of their coverage of Oswald, and the serious problems raised (e.g. by the photographs of the visitor to the Russian Embassy).

The significance of this FBI report is not primarily that material was withheld from the FBI, since some of it had been turned over previously and more apparently was forwarded quite soon; it is that at least once the CIA made a false statement about the extent of their Oswald file.

2. TOPICS ON WHICH DISCLOSURE MAY HAVE BEEN LIMITED

(a) Marina Oswald

The FBI told the Warren Commission that their case on Lee Harvey Oswald was

returned to active status in March 1963 as a result of information obtained during an investigation relating to his wife Marina. FBI agent Hosty testified that it was the FBI's practice to interview immigrants from Communist countries "on a selective basis," and that Marina Oswald had been selected.[44] The results of this FBI practice would seem naturally and properly to be of interest to the CIA. However, the CIA file on Lee Oswald does not give any indication of CIA interest in Marina specifically. There is no apparent reference to any effort by or with the FBI relating to Russian immigrants. (The routine transmittal slips for the FBI reports on Lee Oswald do not refer to the FBI's case on Marina.)

The CIA should be asked to produce any records it has on Marina Oswald. The Agency should be asked if they ever contacted her as a potential informant or otherwise, directly or indirectly. She may well have been known to the CIA through Russians in Dallas, some of whom had links to CIA-supported groups and might well have been reporting to the CIA on the activities of the Russian community.

(b) Oswald's contacts with Albert Schweitzer College

When Oswald left the U.S. in 1959, he had indicated on his passport application that he intended to attend Albert Schweitzer College. This is a small Unitarian-affiliated school in Switzerland specializing in advanced studies in philosophy and the liberal arts.[45] Oswald had indeed been accepted by that school, despite the apparent absence of the proper references and background. When he failed to show up, an investigation was undertaken by the FBI through its Legal Attache in Paris, perhaps in part at the request of Oswald's mother through her Congressman.[46] Since the relevant FBI records have not been made available, I do not know whether any of them were sent to the CIA, but that would have been appropriate. It should be determined if there was any FBI-CIA liaison on this matter (and if not, why not); and, if so, why there is no record of it in the CIA file on Oswald, CD 692.

The CIA, the FBI, and ONI should also be asked if there was any intelligence interest in Schweitzer College, or any direct or indirect government support. That might explain Oswald's peculiar contacts with the College. If the CIA evaluated this matter in documents provided to the Warren Commission, they should be made public.

(c) The unidentified man photographed in Mexico City

(See section II.B.1 supra.) I am confident that the CIA ultimately did provide an explanation of this "mistake" which was good enough to satisfy the Warren Commission. However, there are strong indications that the CIA was not candid with the Commission at first. The Commission first learned about the

photo because it had been shown to Marguerite Oswald shortly after the assassination. However, as late as March 12 the Commission was asking the CIA about Oswald's activities in Mexico and about the photograph apparently without knowing that these matters were related.[47] The CIA had apparently not yet replied to a letter which had been sent a month previously asking for an explanation of the photograph.

3. CIA ASSERTIONS OF FULL DISCLOSURE

CIA Director McCone and Deputy Director Helms testified that the substance of all relevant pre-assassination information had been supplied to the Commission.[48] CD 692 was described in a covering memo as "an exact reproduction of the Agency's official dossier on Lee Harvey Oswald," but it included only a summary of some of the pre-assassination internal CIA messages about Oswald.[49] A Commission staff member went to Langley and saw a computerized printout on Oswald, which he described as including no document which the Commission had not been given in full or in paraphrase.[50]

The CIA should be asked to list (and, if possible, to release) all records not in the "official dossier" which mentioned Oswald. Specifically, since some records had Oswald's middle name as "Henry," the extent of their search involving variant names should be examined.

B. KEY PERSONS IN THE CIA - WARREN COMMISSION INVESTIGATION

Raymond Rocca, who recently resigned from the Counterintelligence Division, was the CIA's liaison with the Warren Commission. Arthur Dooley, who retired in 1973, was apparently one of the CIA men most involved in the investigation.

According to a Commission memo, Richard Helms was one of the two men at a meeting on March 12, 1964 who would have known if Oswald had been a CIA informant.[51] The name of the second man has been withheld. He should be identified and both should be questioned.

It might be particularly useful to ask the following people from the Warren Commission staff about the issues raised in this memo, and about the degree of CIA cooperation with the Commission.

W. David Slawson, now at the U.S.C. Law School, was the junior lawyer who apparently had the most extensive dealings with the CIA. His area of investigation was Oswald's foreign activities. The New York Times has reported that he recently said that the investigation should be reopened.[52]

William T. Coleman, now Secretary of Transportation, was the senior lawyer in the same area.

Wesley J. Liebeler, now with the Federal government in Washington, was reportedly involved in the investigation of the unidentified man photo, and was

reportedly unable to get a satisfactory explanation from the CIA for their misidentification of the man as Oswald.[53]

Samuel A. Stern, now with Wilmer Cutler and Pickering in Washington, examined the CIA evaluation of Oswald, particularly from the viewpoint of liaison with the Secret Service and procedures for Presidential protection. He was also involved with investigating the allegations that Oswald was an FBI or CIA informant.

C. THE CIA'S OWN INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION

1. CIA CAPABILITY FOR AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION

The CIA, of course, openly worked with the Warren Commission in areas involving foreign activities. In addition, the Agency was given the ability to assess much of the evidence in other areas. At the Commission's request, the FBI sent the CIA not only material with foreign aspects, but also reports on possible subversive activities by Oswald in the U.S.; the FBI also forwarded to the CIA all the major investigative reports coming out of the Dallas office.[54] The Secret Service was also asked to send the CIA a number of its reports, including all interviews of Marina Oswald.[55]

On occasion during the life of the Commission, the CIA actively suggested further investigation. For example, one Agency memo said it was of considerable importance to investigate the report that Oswald had attempted suicide in Russia, and that if necessary his body should be exhumed to see if he really did have a scar on his wrist.[56]

The Warren Commission, constrained by (among other things) the need to make a public report within a reasonable time, did not even adequately pursue all the important leads in the material the FBI did submit. The CIA was not so constrained.

2. UNKNOWN CIA CONCLUSIONS

The CIA interest in the assassination continued after the Warren Commission finished its work. For example, more than two months after the Warren Report came out, the CIA asked for a copy of the Zapruder film of the shooting. According to the FBI, it was requested "for training purposes."[57] Presumably this means for training photoanalysts.

The FBI - Commission study of this film was superficial. Most notably, the Warren Report failed to mention, much less explain, the fact that Kennedy was driven forcefully backwards by the fatal shot (which, according to the Commission, came from behind him). Contrary to expectations, a target does sometimes recoil back towards the gun.[58] It would be interesting to know if the CIA came up with this explanation. In any case, the Agency should reveal what use it made of, and

what conclusions it reached from the Zapruder film.[59]

Agency officials testified in May 1964 that they had found no evidence causing them to conclude that there had been a conspiracy, but that the case would never be considered closed.[60] The CIA should be asked to produce their internal reports on the assassination, particularly any which reached conclusions or postdated the Warren Report.

3. CIA ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CRITICS OF THE WARREN REPORT

It would be perfectly proper if the CIA has investigated charges made by the critics alleging foreign involvement in the assessination. Such investigative reports should be made public.

CIA coverage of the critics may have included the dissemination of false reports to draw attention away from serious questions which involved the Agency. Other researchers who have been more active in the investigation than me could no doubt provide details about some of the suspicious incidents and persons.

Jim Garrison charged that the CIA was involved in the assassination and also hindered his investigation. Since the former charge has received wide attention, despite Garrison's lack of substantiating evidence, the CIA should be asked to explain its links with any of the principals in the Garrison matter. This should include suspects, peripheral figures associated with them, investigators, and some of the witnesses and their attorneys; CIA connections with David Ferrie and Guy Banister should be given special attention.[61] If it is true, as Victor Marchetti has reportedly said, that Clay Shaw had been a CIA contact in connection with his foreign trade activities and the CIA was concerned about keeping this fact secret, that might explain some of the strong opposition to Garrison (although it would not add to Garrison's flimsy case that Shaw conspired to kill Kennedy).

The extent of CIA efforts to disseminate derogatory information about the critics should be examined. The Agency did give the Warren Commission a 1937 Gestapo memo on Joachim Joesten, the author of one of the first critical books on the assassination.[62] Information that Joesten had been a member of the German Communist Party, taken from the same memo, was later introduced into the Congressional Record in a report (allegedly written by the CIA) which claimed that his criticism of the Warren Report was part of a "Communist bloc defamation campaign."[63] The Agency should also be asked if it intercepted the mail of, or otherwise interfered with, any of the critics of the Warren Report, in the United States or abroad.

IV. POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION AND CIA ANTI-CASTRO ACTIVITIES

A. SUMMARY OF THE FACTUAL BASIS FOR AN INQUIRY

The considerable attention recently given to the possibility of a connection between the CIA and the Kennedy assassination has been largely based on two very provocative and undoubtedly significant facts. The first is that the CIA tried to kill Fidel Castro, working on occasion through the Mafia. This CIA plot was reportedly the basis for fears that Castro had retaliated against Kennedy. The second is one of the major unresolved questions of Watergate: E. Howard Hunt's apparently sensational knowledge about "the whole Bay of Pigs thing" which led President Nixon to cut off the investigation. Since the basic facts of the Bay of Pigs are hardly secret, and Hunt has admitted proposing the assassination of Castro in connection with that operation, it is reasonable to speculate that "the whole Bay of Pigs thing" was a reference to knowledge of such a plot or its consequences, or to the related Howard Hughes - CIA link.

These matters undoubtedly should be given major attention by those who are now investigating the CIA. I would like to suggest that they should be studied with the perspective provided by a third fact: a definite link between a man representing himself as "Leon Oswald" (perhaps Lee Harvey Oswald himself) and one of the assassination attempts against Castro.

B. LINK BETWEEN "OSWALD" AND A PLOT TO KILL CASTRO

1. SUMMARY OF THE SYLVIA ODIO INCIDENT

An episode which caused the Warren Commission staff a great deal of concern was reported by Sylvia Odio, a Cuban active in the anti-Castro movement. She identified Lee Harvey Oswald as one of three men who had visited her home in Dallas about two months before the assassination. Odio said that this man was introduced to her as "Leon Oswald" and was described as an American ex-Marine - "great, kind of nuts" - who thought that President Kennedy should have been shot after the Bay of Pigs "because he was the one who was holding the freedom of Cuba."[64] The men themselves linked attempts against Kennedy and Castro, saying that Leon Oswald "could do anything like getting underground in Cuba, like killing Castro."[65] These men said they were seeking Odio's help in their anti-Castro activities and persuasively claimed to be friends of her father, who was imprisoned in Cuba. Odio's veracity was strengthened by the way her story came out, and by the fact that it tied Oswald to a movement with which she sympathized (specifically the relatively moderate JURE group, headed by Manolo Ray).[66]

This incident is important whether or not the real Oswald was involved. An attempt to impersonate Oswald in such a situation would establish a conspiracy

not only against Kennedy but against Oswald.[67] The Commission staff recognized the significance of Odio's story. David Slawson called her "the most significant witness linking Oswald to anti-Castro Cubans."[68] Assistant Counsel Burt Griffin said that "the most reasonable situations under which Oswald might have had conspirators ... derive from his efforts to infiltrate the anti-Castro Cubans and to obtain a visa to Cuba"; he said that the Warren Report "should explore at length the allegations made by Sylvia Odio."[69] Just ten days before the Warren Report came out, Wesley Liebeler wrote that "Odio may well be right" and that "the Commission will look bad if it turns out she is."[70]

The Commission's investigation never really got beyond a search (reasonably successful) for evidence that Oswald himself was not one of Odio's visitors. At the last minute, three anti-Castro activists were tentatively identified as the visitors, but later interviews seem to have invalidated that hypothesis.[71]

2. CONNECTION BETWEEN ODIO AND AN ATTEMPT TO KILL CASTRO

Sylvia Odio's father, with whom her visitors claimed to be well acquainted, was generally described as a "political prisoner."[72] The fact is that he was arrested by the Cuban government because of his involvement in an attempt to kill Castro. The senior Odios had harbored one of the assassins after this attempt on Castro failed.

These facts are established by a combination of investigative reports submitted to the Warren Commission and press reports which appeared before the Kennedy assassination. I am not mentioning the name of the man arrested with Mr. Odio in this memo, because I think an investigation should be conducted before this material is made public. (I do not know anything other than what is in public sources.[73])

Because this assassination attempt occured reasonably close in time to the Bay of Pigs, it is reasonable to suspect that the CIA was directly involved in it. In any case, the CIA must have learned the details of the plot, if only after it happened. It is clearly important that Agency records and witnesses be probed to learn as much as possible about this link between the Kennedy assassination and an action of the kind the CIA was mounting against Castro.

C. PRESS REPORTS INTERPRETING CIA ACTIONS AGAINST CASTRO

Alleged CIA attempts to kill foreign leaders, notably Castro, have received a great deal of attention lately.[74] The latest reports make explicit what was strongly suggested earlier: that the publication of the stories about possible retaliation by Castro was in itself an act with political significance and consequences. Given the information in the previous section, it is important

to examine these reports while keeping in mind the possibility that the CIA had an interest in diverting attention from this particular link between its activities and the Kennedy case.

Jack Anderson reported in 1967 that "President Johnson is sitting on a political H-bomb - an unconfirmed report that Senator Robert Kennedy may have approved an assassination plot which then possibly backfired against his late brother."[75] Anderson said that a plot against Castro was considered while Robert Kennedy was "riding herd on the Agency" after the Bay of Pigs. "Insiders" told Anderson that for the plot to "reach the high level it did," it must have been taken up with Kennedy; one source "insisted" that Robert Kennedy played a key role in the planning. Anderson also cited John Kennedy's disillusionment with the CIA, and a report that Castro "with characteristic fury" launched a counterplot; he said that the FBI told President Johnson that Cuban leaders had hoped for Kennedy's death.[76] Anderson suggested that Robert Kennedy's "morose" behavior after the assassination might have been due to the "terrible thought that he had helped put into motion forces that indirectly may have brought about his brother's martyrdom."

In 1971, Anderson expanded his story, reporting that there were six CIA attempts to kill Castro, occuring between March 1961 and March 1963. All six were reportedly carried out through John Roselli, a man with strong links to organized crime.[77] These columns repeated the suggestion that the plots might have backfired against Kennedy when Castro learned of them.[78]

The Anderson columns did not go into the possibility - rather, the probability - that there were other CIA attempts against Castro.[79] Nor did they raise the possibility that a plot had backfired when the Kennedys or the CIA tried to call it off, and the resentful gunmen turned against the United States. There is at least as much political logic to this hypothesis as to the alternate version. It is known that some anti-Castro Cubans resented President Kennedy's lack of support in 1962-63, typified by the well publicized raid on an anti-Castro training camp near New Orleans in August 1963[80] and by the reported withdrawal of support for a second invasion around the time of the Missile Crisis.[81] If Castro had decided to retaliate against Kennedy, it is most unlikely that he would have used Oswald, whose pro-Castro activities were a matter of record in CIA and FBI files, and known to the public (because of his radio appearances) and to the anti-Castro Cuban community. Surely the Cuban government had agents in the U.S. with solid anti-Castro covers.

It is reasonable to assume that the original Anderson report was based on information given to him by the CIA. This conclusion is supported not only by

his citations of "top officials" as sources, but by information provided to me by a moderately reliable source suggesting that Anderson thought the story had been given to him with the approval of the Director of the CIA. Whoever the source, I can only speculate about his intentions. There may have been a desire to affect the strained relationship between President Johnson and Robert Kennedy, or there may have been reasons related to Kennedy's continuing passive endorsement of the Warren Report in the face of strong public concern about the assassination. Even if the only true part of the 1967 report was that some elements in the U.S. Government had planned to kill Castro, it may have been leaked for the purpose of persuading Robert Kennedy to continue his silence about his brother's death. It should be noted that the CIA has apparently not chosen to leak information about the anti-Castro assassination attempt which is linked to the Odio incident.

It has just recently been revealed that Robert Kennedy was "outraged" by the 1967 Anderson column. He told two of his assistants that he had stopped, not started, the plot against Castro.[82] (It appears that he was referring to an attempt using the Mafia, presumably Roselli.) One news report indicated that one of the Kennedy aides had emphasized that Robert Kennedy learned of the CIA-Mafia link before his brother became President, thus implying that Castro could not have retaliated against the Kennedys because of it.[83] Obviously the extent and chronology of all CIA attempts against Castro must be cleared up.

D. POSSIBLE RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE OUTSIDE THE CIA

1. BASIS FOR E. HOWARD HUNT'S BLACKMAIL OF PRESIDENT NIXON

As many observers have noticed, President Nixon's reactions to Hunt's demands for money seem to be based on a fear that he would divulge information on something even more damaging than Watergate. On June 23, 1972, Nixon told Haldeman to have the CIA cut off the FBI investigation on the grounds that it might open up "the whole Bay of Pigs thing." That was presumably related to the long-time CIA links of Hunt and some of the men on his team.

Of course, many details of the CIA's involvement in the Bay of Pigs have been known for years. Whether or not Nixon's fear in that area was genuine, he must have had some reason to believe that the CIA and the FBI would have some idea of what he was referring to. It is quite plausible that "the whole Bay of Pigs thing" was a euphemism for CIA assassination attempts against Castro which had grown out of the Bay of Pigs operation. It seems essential to find out what all of the involved parties - Nixon, Haldeman, Helms, and the FBI - thought (or now think) this meant.

2. HUNT AND ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS AGAINST CASTRO

Hunt chose to bring up the matter of assassination attempts against Castro in his book. He said that he had proposed such an attempt in connection with his work on the Bay of Pigs. He recommended, evidently in writing, that Castro be killed before or at the time of the invasion. Hunt was told that his recommendation was "in the hands of a special group." Perhaps choosing his words to conceal or hint at what he knew, rather than to reveal it, he wrote: "So far as I have been able to determine no coherent plan was ever developed within CIA to assassinate Castro, though it was the heart's desire of many exile groups."[84]

3. WHITE HOUSE CONCERN

In the process of unraveling the stories about the CIA attempts against Castro, it might be helpful to explain the White House reaction to the 1971 Anderson columns. In the Senate Watergate Committee hearings, where this was touched on, there is some indication that these columns touched off a minor flurry of activity.[85] Since the purpose of the Watergate break-in has never been publicly clarified, and there has been much speculation that Larry O'Brien's knowledge of Howard Hughes' activities was somehow involved, it may be relevant that Anderson did specify that the CIA had recruited Roselli through Robert Maheu, a top Hughes aide.[86]

4. THE WARREN COMMISSION

The CIA apparently never volunteered to the Warren Commission any information about the Odio family link to an assassination attempt against Castro. That link should have been established the first time the CIA ran the name of Sylvia Odio through their files. If the link was not noticed within the government earlier, it may be relevant that shortly after the 1971 Anderson columns appeared I sent him the details in my possession, in the hope that he would pursue the matter; he eventually decided not to, but he may well have checked out some of the details with his CIA contacts.

It is reasonable to assume that by now the CIA has done an internal investigation of possible Agency links to the Odio visitors. Any such report, whether or not it was given to the Warren Commission, should be made public.

E. UNANSWERED QUESTIONS IN THIS AREA

As indicated above, there are many aspects of the CIA's actions against Castro which should be examined. One of the many possible sources is Victor Marchetti, whose book contains a footnote commenting on these CIA activities, and noting a published report that President Johnson thought that Kennedy had

been killed in retaliation. The related section of the text was deleted by the CIA before publication; it should be made public now.[87]

Various sources should be asked about the indications that the CIA leaked information about the Roselli plots to Jack Anderson. The observations of Robert Kennedy's aides Peter Edelman and Adam Walinsky should be made part of the formal public record.

There are many aspects of the Odio matter which should be investigated. Many people named in relevant documents were not thoroughly questioned by the FBI or the Warren Commission. First, the activities of the three men who the Warren Report suggested were Odio's visitors should be closely examined; they should be asked to provide any relevant information.

One of these men, Loran Hall, came to the attention of the FBI on the day after the assassination, when it was reported that he had retrieved a pawned rifle; presumably the FBI's source suspected Hall of complicity in the death of Kennedy. It is not clear why the FBI then dropped the matter quickly and reported it to the Warren Commission inadequately and only after a long delay.

A friend of Sylvia Odio insisted that she had told her that anti-Castro Cubans in New Orleans had warned some Dallas Cubans before the assassination that Oswald was thought to be a double agent trying to infiltrate anti-Castro groups; Odio emphatically denied having said this.[88] Some of the New Orleans Cubans who had encountered Oswald, including Odio's uncle, were associated with the CIA-sponsored Cuban Revolutionary Council.

The most important new topic for investigation is the attempt to kill Castro which led to the arrest of Sylvia Odio's father. The degree of CIA sponsorship or knowledge of it must be determined.

The whole story of links between Cuban activities (pro- and anti-Castro), Oswald, and the assassination is a complicated one. The most significant evidence might emerge from some of the clues which were too complex to attract the attention of the Warren Commission. The Odio incident and its ramifications (some of which were not known to the Commission) can properly be explored without a formal recognition of the overall inadequacies of the Commission's work. Hopefully some members of the Commission staff will be willing to admit that their work was at least incomplete, and will endorse a reopening of the entire investigation.

Particularly relevant here are two examples of leads which were not obvious but which should have been checked out by the Commission (and should be checked out now). The first story involves a lawyer from the firm which in mid-1963 defended Chicago syndicate figure Sam Giancana against FBI harassment. (Giancana

has been named as a Mafia leader who may have aided the CIA in spying against Castro.[89]) On the day after the assassination, this lawyer sent a telegram to Oswald offering his services if Oswald had not been able to obtain counsel. I am convinced that this gesture was made on proper civil-libertarian grounds, in response to the apparent violation of Oswald's rights in the absence of an attorney. The law firm involved had a good reputation for civil rights work. This lawyer should be given the chance to answer for the record any suspicions that might be raised by his firm's prior representation of Giancana.

The second story might turn out to be a new and valuable clue to the identity, purposes, and organizational links of the men who visited Sylvia Odio. There was an anti-Castro Cuban in Dallas who apparently resembled Oswald so much that a gas station operator who saw him a few days before the assassination later told the FBI that he thought he had seen Oswald. The FBI was told by an informant that this man was "violently" anti-Kennedy; he denied that. He was the president of the Dallas branch of the anti-Castro organization which was headed by one of the principals in the attempt on Castro's life which had led to the arrest of Odio's parents. The Dallas group held meetings at 3126 Hollandale [Street]; the Warren Commission received but did not resolve an allegation reported to a Dallas Deputy Sheriff that Oswald had attended meetings of a Cuban group at "3128 Harlendale."[90] This man is named in several Warren Commission records, but as far as I know the staff never took note of the apparent resemblance to Oswald, and never checked out the possibility that he had been the "Leon Oswald" who visited Sylvia Odio or that he had otherwise been involved in a conspiracy.

This is what
So. the FBI identification
& confrontation established
this identity. If this
info. had to the
exclusion of anyone else.

POSTSCRIPT: WARREN COMMISSION STAFF SPECULATION ABOUT THE ODIO INCIDENT

After this memo was written, I received from the National Archives a formerly withheld internal Commission memo in which the Odio incident is discussed at some length. This undated memo was written by William Coleman and David Slawson at roughly the midpoint of the investigation, to present to the Commission members the evidence pertaining to foreign involvement in the assassination. The discussion of the Odio incident reflects the kind of reasonable speculation and intelligent critical analysis which is so conspicuously missing from most of the final report.

This analysis sounds as if it was written by one of the more knowledgeable critics of the Warren Report. After summarizing the known facts in the Odio case, Coleman and Slawson wrote:

> "The evidence here could lead to an anti-Castro Cuban involvement in the assassination on some sort of basis as this: Oswald could have become known to the Cubans as being strongly pro-Castro. He made no secret of his sympathies, and so the anti-Castro Cubans must have realized that the law-enforcement authorities were also aware of Oswald's feelings and that therefore, if he got into trouble, the public would also learn of them. The anti-Cuban [sic] group may even have believed the fiction Oswald tried to create that he had organized some sort of large active Fair Play For Cuba group in New Orleans. Second, someone in the anti-Castro organization might have been keen enough to sense that Oswald had a penchant for violence that might easily be aroused. This was evident, for example, when he laughed at the Cubans and told them it would be easy to kill Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs. On these facts, it is possible that some sort of deception was used to encourage Oswald to kill the President when he came to Dallas. Perhaps 'double agents' were even used to persuade Oswald that pro-Castro Cubans would help in the assassination or in the get-away afterwards. The motive on this would of course be the expectation that after the President was killed Oswald would be caught or at least his identity ascertained, the law-enforcement authorities and the public would then blame the assassination on the Castro government, and the call for its forceful overthrow would be irresistable. A 'second Bay of Pigs Invasion' would begin, this time, hopefully, to end successfully.

The memo's next sentence calls for the comment that speculation which seemed "wild" eleven years ago may not be so wild today:

> "The foregoing is probably only a wild speculation, but the facts that we already know are certainly sufficient to warrant additional investigation."

The Commission's additional investigation was not adequate, and facts known now but not known to Coleman and Slawson in 1964 make additional investigation even more necessary.

64. 11H372. For a general discussion, see WR 321-4 and Meagher, "Accessories After the Fact," p. 376-387.

65. 11H377.

66. On Odio's veracity, see e.g. Meagher (note 64), p. 380.

67. There were other incidents where someone might have been impersonating Oswald. David Slawson has said that "the interposition of an impostor, if that happened, is a political act." (Ref. 52) See also p. 7 supra.

68. Hubert and Griffin memo of April 7, 1964 to Rankin.

69. Griffin memo of August 20, 1964 to Willens.

70. Liebeler memo of September 14, 1964 to Willens.

71. Meagher (note 64), p. 387; compare WR 324 and CD 1553.

72. WR 322.

73. I will be glad to send this material to serious investigators. Copies have already been given to several researchers.

74. E.g., NYT March 10, 1975, p. 1.

75. Drew Pearson column of March 3, 1967 in (e.g.) the S.F. Chronicle. Apparently this column did not appear in the Washington Post except for a very short version on March 7, 1967.

76. This may be a reference to CD 1359, a still-withheld Top Secret letter of 6/17/64 from Hoover to Rankin, re statements by Castro on the assassination.

77. The first two attempts involved poison capsules, and the other four involved teams with rifles and explosives who were taken to Cuba by Roselli.

78. Jack Anderson columns of Jan. 18, Jan. 19, and Feb. 23, 1971.

79. For other attempts against Castro, see Szulc, Esquire, Feb. '74, p. 90-91, and Scott, Ramparts, Nov. '74, p. 14-15, 54.

80. New Orleans Times-Picayune, August 1, 1963, p. 1.

81. E.g., NYT, 4/19/63, p. 14; 4/21/63, p. 26; 5/1/63, p. 11.

82. NYT, Mar. 10, 1975, p. 1.

83. This was a national TV network news report; the text is not available to me now.

84. Hunt, "Give Us This Day," p. 38-39.

85. Senate Watergate Committee Hearings, pp. 9723, 9749-55.

86. Anderson column, Jan. 18, 1971 (S.F. Chronicle, p. 39).

87. Marchetti & Marks (ref. 63), p. 290 (paperback edition).

88. CD 1546, p. 179; CE 3147, p. 5.

89. NYT, Mar. 10, 1975, p. 1.

90. 19H534.

27. WR 307-8; also CD 1084E, section IX.
28. CD 1000. Some passages are still withheld.
29. Time, Feb. 10, 1975, p. 16; "The Vantage Point," p. 26-7 (paperback edition); Atlantic, July 1973, p. 39.
30. Peter Dale Scott, Ramparts, Nov. 1973, p. 13.
31. CD 87, SS 569; CD 235; CD 409, p. 3; CD 1115-XIII-103; Wise & Ross, "Invisible Government," p. 268 (paperback edition).
32. 9H235-6; CD 555, p. 76.
33. CD 555, p. 76.
34. See, e.g., "Whitewash II" by Harold Weisberg, Ch. 6; CD 950.
35. 18H795-6.
36. CE 1961; Rankin letter of 5/19/64 to Folsom.
37. CD 33, pp. 1-2.
38. NYT Dec. 25, 1974, p. 1.
39. E.g., CD 692(g).
40. Lists of withheld CD's and CIA CD's are available from the author.
41. Letter of Dec. 14, 1971, from L. K. White to the author.
42. CD 49, p. 22.
43. See p. 7 supra.
44. 4H441. — ?
45. WR 688.
46. 1H213; CD 120, p. 4-5; CE 834, items 13, 15-18, 20.
47. Memo of 3/12/64, Slawson to the files, p. 7 (also p. 8); Coleman memo of 3/26/64.
48. 5H122.
49. Slawson memo of 3/12/64, p. 8.
50. Stern memo of 3/27/64 to Rankin; 5H122.
51. Slawson memo of 3/12/64, p. 8.
52. NYT, Feb. 23, 1975, p. 32.
53. Epstein, "Inquest," pp. 93-95 (hard cover edition).
54. Rankin letter to Hoover, 1/31/64; Hoover letter to Rankin, Feb. 5, 1964.
55. Rankin letters to J. Rowley (USSS), Jan. 31 and Feb. 7, 1964.
56. Helms memo to Papich (FBI), Feb. 18, 1964.
57. Hoover letter to Rankin, Feb. 4, 1964 (Weisberg, "Photographic Whitewash," p. 143.
58. This has been confirmed by an experiment I helped another investigator perform.
59. My request for this information under the Freedom of Information Act is pending.
60. 5H123-4.
61. See, for example, Jim Squires' article in the Chicago Tribune, 3/16/75, p. 1.
62. CD 1532, still withheld.
63. Cong. Rec. 9/23/65, p. 25393; Marchetti & Marks, "The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence," p. 339 (paperback edition).

1. This false document says that Ruby was "performing information functions" for Nixon and HUAC in 1947. In fact, Ruby did try to contact the Kefauver Crime Committee in that year, possibly to act as an informant; that was suppressed by the FBI and not explored by the Warren Commission.
2. New York Times [hereinafter "NYT"], Feb. 3, 1975, p. 14.
3. CE [i.e., Warren Commission Exhibit] 821 (17H700 [i.e., Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, Vol. 17, page 700]).
4. CE 834, question #1 (17H789-790).
5. NYT Jan. 16, 1975, p. 31. In 1960 the CIA intercepted a letter sent to the Soviet Union by Bella Abzug in connection with her legal work in an estate case. (NYT, March 8, 1975, p. 11)
6. CD [i.e., Warren Commission Document (in the National Archives)] 692, part (a). (See section II.D infra.)
7. That is, the file entitled "Funds Transmitted to Residents of Russia," as distinguished from the file entitled "Oswald."
8. CD 692, part (a), item 4.
9. WR [i.e., Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy] 326.
10. CD 692, part (a), item 4, pp. 1-2.
11. WR 408; see also WR 290.
12. See, for example, a memo to the files from General Counsel J. Lee Rankin, undated but approximately January 24-27, 1964, entitled "Rumors that Oswald was an undercover agent." The reported CIA informant number, 110669, was apparently not checked out. For the Commission's reaction to these rumors, see "Whitewash IV - JFK Assassination Transcript," written and published by Harold Weisberg.
13. WR 325-7.
14. Washington Post, Nov. 22, 1974, p. 3; Commission executive session transcript for Jan. 27, 1964, p. 153-4 (reprinted in Weisberg book, note 12).
15. The CIA also denied having interviewed Oswald in Moscow. See CD 528.
16. The other defector was Robert Edward Webster. See NYT, 5/25/62, p. 5.
17. WR 713; Peter Dale Scott, Ramparts, November 1973, p. 17.
18. WR 700, but compare 8H330-343 and CE 92.
19. Milton Kaack and Warren C. DeBrueys. Compare CE 825 with CE 826 and CD 692(a)4.
20. CE 835 (17H816).
21. See the article by Fensterwald and O'Toole in the New York Review, April 3, 1975, and the Warren Commission records cited therein.
22. CD 1084D, pp. 4-5.
23. CD 1084D, pp. 5-6; also see draft memo of April 1, 1964, by Coleman and Slawson, p. 3.
24. Tad Szulc, "Compulsive Spy," p. 96-97.
25. NYT Mar. 8, 1975, p. 11.
26. Some are presumably in part (g) of CD 692, for example.